

Amendments to the Claims

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1. (Currently amended) A method of administering identifying characteristics in a computer, comprising the steps of:
inputting ~~the~~ an identifying characteristic ~~by~~ from a user;
checking the identifying characteristic ~~by a checking device during input, involving the~~
~~check of~~ as it is being inputted for conformance with one or more check criteria; and
transmitting the identifying characteristic to a identifying characteristic processing device
if the identifying characteristic meets ~~all~~ the check criteria.
 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
notifying the user during input as to whether the identifying characteristic meets the
check criteria.
 3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2, in which the notification to the user is
effected by offering the user a facility to ~~terminate input of~~ select the inputted identifying
characteristic for transmission to the identifying characteristic checking device, in which the
facility is deactivated if the identifying characteristic fails to meet at least one check criterion, in
which the facility is activated if the identifying characteristic meets all check criteria, and in
which the identifying characteristic is only transmitted to the identifying characteristic
processing device when it is selected for transmission thereto ~~input is terminated~~.
 4. (Original) The method of claim 1 in which, if the identifying characteristic comprises
several components, the check is performed for each component individually.
 5. (Original) The method of claim 1 in which, during the check, the deviation of the
identifying characteristic from the check criteria is established, and the input operation is aborted
if a specific degree of deviation is exceeded.
 6. (Currently amended) A device for administering identifying characteristics in a computer,
comprising:

means for inputting ~~the~~ an identifying characteristic ~~by~~ from a user;
a check device for checking the identifying characteristic ~~during input~~ as it is being
inputted for conformance ~~to~~ with one or more check criteria; and

means for transmitting the identifying characteristic to an identifying characteristic
processing device if the identifying characteristic meets the check criteria.

7. (Currently amended) The device of claim 6, comprising means for informing the user
during input as to whether the identifying characteristic meets the check criteria.

8. (Currently amended) The device of claim 6, comprising:
a facility for ~~terminating input of~~ selecting the inputted identifying characteristic for
transmission to the identifying characteristic processing device by the user;
means for deactivating the facility; and
means for activating the facility.

9. (Original) The device of claim 6, comprising means for checking each component
individually if the identifying characteristic comprises several components,.

10. (Original) The device of claims 6, comprising:
means for establishing a deviation of the identifying characteristic from the check
criteria; and
means for aborting the input operation if a specific degree of deviation is exceeded.

11. (New) The method of claim 1 in which the transmitting step comprises the steps of:
enabling a user-actuated selection facility upon inputting of an identifying characteristic
meeting the check criteria; and
transmitting the inputted identifying characteristic to the identifying characteristic
processing device upon actuation of the selection facility by the user.

12. (New) The method of claim 11 in which the identifying characteristic is a password and one of the check criteria is a matching of a first entry of the password with a second entry of the password.

13. (New) The method of claim 1 in which the identifying characteristic is transmitted to the identifying characteristic processing device without user intervention upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria.

14. (New) A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform the method steps of claim 1.

15. (New) The device of claim 6 in which the transmitting means comprises:
means for enabling a selection facility that may be actuated by the user upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria; and
means for transmitting the inputted identifying characteristic to the identifying characteristic processing device upon actuation of the selection facility by the user.

16. (New) The device of claim 6 in which the transmitting means transmits the identifying characteristic to the identifying characteristic processing device without user intervention upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria.
